



UNIVERSITY  
OF NATAL  
**CASS**  
DURBAN

STUDENTS IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS AT NATAL UNIVERSITY:  
A PROFILE OF PROBLEMS AND INTERESTS.

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**COMMUNICATIONS OF THE**  
**CENTRE FOR APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**SENTRUM VIR TOEGEPASTE MAATSKAPLIKE WETENSKAPPE**  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Early in 1982 the Board of the Faculty of Arts established a subcommittee to consider broadly the factors affecting students' success within the Faculty. After careful deliberation the subcommittee decided to request the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) to undertake a focussed survey of student problems and student concerns within the Faculty in order to guide them in their decisions. The Academic Support Services generously made available the necessary funding in order to conduct the survey.\*

Studies like the one reported on here should be a vital aspect of decision-making within the university. While the provisions made for student participation in university government and other channels of communication go far to provide some redress to students with problems and frustrations, there are obvious limits to the ability of student representatives or spokesmen on committees to articulate the widely varying and diverse needs of the complex groupings in a student community. Inevitably some issues take precedence over others as a consequence of the nature of debates on committees. A balanced sample survey, however, can provide a sufficiently wide-ranging view of the whole spectrum of student interests and concerns to compliment other forms of communication in the decision-making process very effectively.

This study has been undertaken somewhat as a trial venture. It has been mounted with very limited finance and equally limited staff resources. If, however, even a limited survey can provide useful insights for decision-making within the university community, then it can be anticipated that more adequately funded investigations supported by Senate or Council could be carried out with very great effect.

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## 2. METHODS

A very basic and problematic question in any survey of a university community concerns the drawing of the sample. If one wishes to sample along conventional lines, i.e. using methods of random selection, one is faced with the problem that individually-selected students have to be visited at their home addresses since they are a shifting population on campus.

For these obvious reasons on a limited budget we could not afford to draw a random sample of students. Therefore we opted for a carefully controlled "quota" sample. For the quota controls we used the following characteristics to ensure broad representativeness in the sample:

- sex
- race
- day-student or residence
- academic year.

Proportions were calculated from statistics for the Faculty of Arts and these proportions were imposed on the sample. In seeking students for selection, we attempted as far as possible to spread the points of contact around the campus in order to minimise biases due to the clustering of student sub-cultures in different places.

Due to pressure of work in the Centre for Applied Social Sciences the commencement of the fieldwork was delayed by some months. Interviewing took place towards the end of the academic year, some of it in fact right up to the pre-examination period. This timing limited the size of the sample to some extent, although almost equally-great limitations would have been imposed by funding constraints in any event. It could be argued that interviewing close to examinations may have produced certain biases. On the other hand, there may have been some advantage in interviewing students at the time of greatest stress. It was probably a time most likely to evoke a ready articulation of problems related to academic pressure and stress. In this sense the period of interviewing

may have been quite useful, although its particular effects have to be borne in mind in assessing the results.

Co-author Geerdts conducted the interviews, using the following approach. She would approach a student, establish whether or not the student fitted a category in the quota sample, and if so would explain the purpose of the study, motivate the respondent and introduce the questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed for self-completion and in most cases the student completed the questionnaire themselves in the presence of the interviewer, who was ready to explain and deal with problems in a neutral way.

The students took the study seriously and appeared to respond sincerely. A total of 150 students was included in the sample. A larger sample could have been obtained had questionnaires been distributed for self-completion without an interviewer present. This approach, however, would have encouraged flippant answers and would also have resulted in a fairly high rate of non-response, with the consequence of serious bias. We adjudge a carefully controlled sample of 150 to be an adequate basis for generalising for Art students on the Durban campus of the University of Natal as a total group. (Details of the quota-controls are given in Appendix I. The Interview Schedule used is presented in Appendix II.)

### 3. THE RESULTS: STUDENT ORIENTATIONS TO ACADEMIC ACTIVITY

#### 3.1 Goals in coming to university

Students were asked: *"Please give us your main reasons for choosing university education when you first enrolled?"* As is only to be expected many of the responses are vague generalities and platitudes, and only certain aspects of the distribution of answers given below are of specific interest. The reasons given by students can be classified as follows:

<u>Reasons for choice of university education</u>	<u>%</u>
Career goals or future job security	- 66
Desire for higher education, degree or similar general answers	- 60
Personal or intellectual development/development of social awareness	- 45
Negative answers (nothing better to do/avoid the army, etc.)	- 19
Intrinsic interest of subjects or interest in variety of courses	- 17
Social and recreational motives	- 12
Social pressure or status interests	- 11
Narrow financial interests	- 9
Other diverse answers	- 3

In the listing above the percentages sum to more than 100 due to the fact that students, obviously, could give more than one reason for choosing university education. What is suggested by this array of answers is that the most common motivation is of a very general and obvious kind connected with career prospects or the advantages of higher education. It is noteworthy, however, that as many as 45 percent of students mention intellectual development or personal growth. Some 17 percent mention a specific interest in subjects or subject combinations, which is perhaps not as high as academic staff would like to see.

It is perhaps disturbing that as many as 19 percent gave purely negative motivations, like having nothing better to do or avoiding the army. If one adds to this category the category of recreational interests in the university (12%) and status goals (11%) then one realises that there is some roughly one-third of



students in the Arts Faculty whose interest in and motives for being at university are somewhat dubious in relation to the goals and challenges which university studies are supposed to represent. We must emphasise here that these students were not in any way tricked into giving these rather revealing answers. They offered them spontaneously and seriously in response to a straightforward question. Broadly we would say then, that the proportion of students displaying inappropriate motivations may be somewhat too high for the good of academic morale in the Faculty.

Along similar lines students were asked: *"What two things do you want to achieve from your university education - the first and second most important?"* Here the students' answers were more 'respectable' in terms of university expectations, as the listing of results below indicates:

<u>Things students desire to achieve from university education</u>	<u>%</u>
Broader education/better qualifications/higher education	62
Better job prospects or career or future security	43
Development of intellect and knowledge	32
Development of self and personal growth	30
Social awareness and social development	19
Narrow financial reasons	9
Other reasons	1

These answers contrast with the more revealing answers in response to the previous question. Admittedly, in the earlier question we were concerned with their motives on first coming to university. Therefore it may be that the effects of inappropriate motivation are particularly concentrated among first year students. The results above indicate that when looking to the future (i.e. what they wish to achieve) most of the shallow motivations reflected in the first set of results disappear. To some extent university socialisation has an effect of a positive kind. To be cynical, however, it has to be borne in mind that the students were perhaps prepared to be honest about their initial motivations, but were more selfconscious in talking about their present orientations. The truth probably lies somewhere between these two possibilities. Therefore, we would like to suggest

that evidence of a problem of appropriate motivation exists among a substantial minority of students. The problem may be fairly substantial in the first year.

On a related topic, the students were asked whether or not they felt they had made the right choice in coming to university as opposed to doing something else. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents felt that they had made the right choice, while 21 percent were uncertain and only 2 percent felt that the choice had been wrong. While one can take comfort in the fact that a clear majority of nearly eight out of ten feel that they have made the right choice, the fact that as many as one-fifth of students have reservations is a meaningful problem. The particular content of these reservations will emerge as we present further results from the survey.

### 3.2 Perceptions of lectures, tutorials and prescribed reading

Turning to more specific aspects of academic life, we asked the respondents simply what they saw as the "*main purpose of a lecture*". The results are presented in the listing below:

<u>Purpose of lecture</u>	<u>%</u>
To provide an outline or framework	- 51
To provide information concerning specific aspects or problems	- 21
General expansion of knowledge or providing general information	- 17
Stimulate further study or promote interest in the content	- 15
As a guide to and background for further readings	- 12
To give direction to studies	- 10
To take notes and cover work for the exams	- 7
To give the lecturer's approach to the topic	- 5

From an academic point of view it is difficult to fault the respondents' answers on this topic. It is evident that less than one out of ten give answers which suggest a parrot-like approach to attending lectures. Here again, one is not sure how honest they are, but their spontaneous answers at least reveal an awareness of the purpose of lectures, which is to orientate, stimulate and



locate specific aspects of knowledge rather than to provide material for swotting.

In similar vein we asked the students to indicate what they saw as the purpose of attending seminars. Only some 4 percent of the students felt that seminars were of no benefit. A perusal of the other answers indicates an academically sound and constructive perception of the purpose of seminars and tutorials. The vast majority of students pointed out that they were there to supplement lecture material or to provide a detailed examination of specific issues. Another major viewpoint was that they allowed participation by students in the enquiry into the topic and thereby encouraged the expression of individual views. A further major category of answers pointed out that seminars and tutorials helped in the resolution and clarification of problems encountered in the reading or in the lectures.

By and large then, it would not seem as if we have a problem of inappropriate theoretical motivation among students in their approach to lectures, seminars and tutorials.

The results above related to the students' approach and expectations in regard to lectures. They say nothing about what the students perceive themselves as receiving in return. We asked the students to indicate *"how helpful or not"* they found attending lectures. The results here are a little disturbing. While some 23 percent of students felt that they almost always derived benefit from lectures or that all lectures were beneficial, as many as 29 percent of the students indicated that less than one-half of their experiences in attending lectures were beneficial. With only slightly under one-third of our respondents expressing such serious reservations about lecture contacts, there is evidence of a problem.

Turning to seminars and tutorials, a similar question was asked, i.e. *"how helpful or not do you find seminars and tutorials to be?"* Here the situation seems a little worse than that pertaining to their views of lecture contacts. As many as 40 percent of the

student respondents indicated that less than half of their contact experience in seminars and tutorials was "helpful".

We need not speculate on the results above at this point other than to emphasise that a serious problem obviously exists. Further results presented later on indicate fairly clearly what problems exist in contacts with staff in the teaching situation.

Finally, in this section we considered the student approach to recommended prescribed reading. We asked the question: *"When you read recommended works in the subject, with what purpose in mind do you read?"* The answers here tend to reveal some problems in motivation. As many as 25 percent of the students indicated that they read in order to "write essays" or "for exams". While this indicates a lack of real interest in reading, the balance of answers from the majority of 75 percent indicated a perfectly constructive motivation, such as to gain more information, supplement lecture notes, to achieve a better understanding or to be exposed to different viewpoints. Unfortunately, only 5 percent indicated that they had "enjoyed" or had a "personal interest" in the reading. Some 4 percent of the students gave other answers, most of which seem to reflect a negative motivation. If we add this to the 25 percent who were motivated along very instrumental lines above, we end up with some nearly 3 out of 10 students who appear not to be enjoying or benefitting as much from reading as they should be. This is perhaps an indication of a problem of fair magnitude.

#### 4. REACTIONS TO THE ACADEMIC SERVICE AND FACILITIES

##### 4.1 Problems with staff

We have already seen an indication of problems with lectures in questions already discussed. The results below shed further light on this. Students were asked to *"think in general"* of the staff teaching their courses, i.e. to think of the *"typical staff member, not the worst or the best"*.

A modification of the Semantic Differential Scale involving two opposite points of view on a number of issues, was used, with students having to rate their own perceptions along five gradients between positive and negative, with a neutral middle category.

The following results were obtained:-

##### IMAGES OF TYPICAL STAFF TEACHING STUDENT'S COURSES

<u>MEDIAN</u>	<u>POSITIVE</u>	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	<u>NEGATIVE</u>
1,9	very approachable	1---●---1---1---1---1	difficult to approach
1,8	help all students	1---●---1---1---1---1	help favourite students
1,5	know their subjects well	1---●---1---1---1---1	uncertain in their subjects
2	hardworking	1---●---1---1---1---1	lazy
2,6	objective and balanced	1---1---●---1---1---1	biased and ideological
2	seem to like students	1---●---1---1---1---1	seem to dislike students
2,3	clear, well-organised lectures	1---1---●---1---1---1	poorly organised and muddled
2,6	adequate guidance in assignments	1---1---●---1---1---1	insufficient guidance in assignments
2,5	reasonable in work demands	1---1---●---1---1---1	expect too much from students
2,6	stimulating	1---1---●---1---1---1	boring
2,5	understand my difficulties	1---1---●---1---1---1	very little understanding of my difficulties

Students in general seem to feel fairly positive towards their staff.

However, staff are found to be slightly more biased and ideological than objective and balanced, more boring than stimulating, and tending to give insufficient rather than adequate guidance in assignments.

With regard to work demands there was a distinct division between student's attitudes, with half feeling that staff are reasonable and half that staff expect too much. Similarly, 50 percent of the students feel that staff understand their difficulties, while the remaining 50 percent feel that staff have very little understanding.

On the more positive side, a substantial proportion (68%) of students feel that staff know their subjects well. Half of the students find staff hard-working, while only 15 percent find them lazy. Thirty-eight percent find staff giving clear, well-organised lectures compared to 18 percent finding lectures poorly organised and muddled.

A far greater percentage of students also seem to find staff more approachable than not, helping all students rather than favourites, and liking rather than disliking students.

In general, out of eleven indicators, five yield results in which the image of staff is either in balance or slightly negative. The picture emerging is one of a highly qualified assessment of staff among Arts students. Needless to say, this must be taken as evidence of a problem.

The question arises, however, as to whether or not the image of the staff is not a function of an attitude of malcontent among students. We therefore attempted to differentiate between students with a positive general orientation to university and those with problems in motivation.

Various categories were established throughout the study so as to determine the attitudes of different groups of students to university in general. These included:

1. Those students who gave negative reasons for choosing a university education, such as *"Nothing better to do"*, *"In order to avoid the army"*, compared to those students who gave more positive reasons, such as *"Interest in subjects and/or variety of courses offered"*, *"Higher education"* etc.
2. Those students who feel that they had made the right choice in coming to university against those who feel they had not (or had reservations).
3. Those students who feel that the university is doing all it can to help them achieve the best academic results against those who feel that the university is not doing all it can.
4. The three classes of matric i.e. 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Negatively oriented or motivated groups from the above items were selected and their attitudes to staff were assessed. The median results are compared with overall median below:

	Overall	<u>MEDIAN SCORES</u>			3rd Class Matric
		Negative reasons for attendance	Perception of wrong choice in coming to university	Perception of university not doing all it can	
approachability	1,9	2,1	2,4	2,2	2,0
helpfulness	1,8	2,2	2,1	2,2	1,6
subject knowledge	1,5	1,6	1,7	1,6	1,3
performance	2,0	2,3	2,0	2,3	1,8
objectivity	2,6	2,8	3,0	2,8	2,7
liking of students	2,0	1,6	2,2	2,1	2,0
organisation of lectures	2,3	2,5	2,5	2,4	2,3
assignment guidance	2,6	3,2	3,3	3,1	3,0
work demands	2,5	2,4	2,6	2,8	2,8
level of stimulation	2,6	2,8	2,9	2,7	2,7
degree of under- standing	2,5	2,4	3,0	2,7	2,3
combined index	2,2	2,4	2,5	2,4	2,2

In considering the above data it can be seen that those students who had lower motivation in coming to university are less favourable in their attitudes to staff members than students generally. This emerges especially with regard to their feelings about staff helping favourites, being lazy, and giving insufficient guidance in assignments. These students, however, are more positive than the average student about staff in certain respects i.e. they find staff liking all, understanding students' difficulties, and being reasonable in work demands.

Of even greater significance is the attitude of those students who currently regard their choice of coming to university as being the wrong one. Their dissatisfaction with the university establishment as a whole is reflected in the results. They tend to find staff less favourable in all respects than students in general (although they share the trend in finding staff fairly hard-working).

Along similar lines, those students who feel the university is not doing all it can, have more negative impressions of staff members generally. (Interestingly, there is a positive correlation between perception of right choice in coming to university and university doing all it can to help.)

In some respects students who obtained a 3rd class matric have a more favourable view of staff than the average student, while in other respects they have a less favourable view. They tend to find staff more hard-working and more knowledgeable in their subjects. These students possibly require or demand more attention from their staff in that they need more guidance generally. They do, however, also find staff more helpful, and understanding of their difficulties to a greater extent. On the other hand, these students also find staff slightly less approachable, less objective, less reasonable in work demands (maybe because they cannot cope as adequately), less stimulating, and giving less guidance in assignments.



It seems then, that images of staff are to some extent a function of, or related to student satisfaction with university in general. It is perhaps a case of nothing being good enough for the malcontents. However, the relationship is not so strong as to absolve the staff entirely, as it were. The following are the median ratings among those students who felt that the choice in coming to university was the correct one:

approachability	1,7
helpfulness	1,7
subject knowledge	1,4
performance	2,0
objectivity	2,5
liking of students	1,9
lecture organisation	2,2
assignment guidance	2,4
work demands	2,5
level of stimulation	2,5
degree of under- standing	2,3
overall	2,1

We see from these results that even among the more positively motivated students, staff have an ambivalent image as regards objectivity, level of stimulation and work demands. While the last of these three features may not be a real problem, reputations for objectivity and stimulation of interest among staff appear to be somewhat clouded.

An assessment of the approachability of staff was made by asking those interviewed how likely they would be to go to their lecturers or tutors for help if they were to have difficulties in coping with a subject. The following results were obtained:

- "would definitely approach staff for help"	20%
- "would possibly approach staff"	47%
- "would probably not approach staff"	30%
- "would definitely not approach staff"	4%

It seems from this that some 80 percent showed a lesser or greater degree of uncertainty in approaching staff. Asked, "If you are unlikely to approach staff, why would this be?" Some

53 percent seem to be dissatisfied with staff attitudes i.e. 39% percent find lecturers and tutors unapproachable and not interested in their problems, and 14 percent find that lecturers are unavailable.

On the other hand, other reasons for not approaching staff are based on more personal factors. Seventeen percent say that they solve their own problems or consult fellow students, 13 percent lack self-confidence and feel shy about approaching staff, 10 percent feel that they cannot communicate with their lecturers and cannot explain their problems, and 7 percent are too lazy, lack the motivation or have no time to consult staff.

Of most importance here is that roughly one-half of the very high proportion of students evincing some uncertainty about approaching staff seem discouraged by the attitude or availability of lecturers. This we take as evidence of a problem.

#### 4.2 Problems with reading

In order to establish any problems that might exist with regard to prescribed and recommended reading, the students were requested to indicate "*how easily are you able to find and have access to recommended reading?*" A slight majority, 53 percent, find access either very or quite easy, while 47 percent find that access is difficult. The size of the group with difficulties is such as to suggest a problem but we hesitate to make too much of it knowing the near-impossibility of solving the problem of access to books.

#### 4.3 Problems with courses

An analysis was made of students' reactions to the courses they have taken. Firstly they were asked "*how satisfied are you with your choice of courses?*" Some 59 percent seem to be satisfied, 30 percent are uncertain and only 11 percent are generally dissatisfied.

The students were then asked to name the courses they would have liked (or would like) to drop, as well as courses that they have done which have fallen short of the expectations they had of them. Results are combined below. In reading the results we must bear in mind that the students had to write in the names of subjects, for which some degree of real conviction is required:

C O U R S E	Total % of students in sample taking the course	% of students taking the course who would like to drop it	% of students taking the course who feel it has fallen short
(NOTE: The estimates on these course with few students are highly unreliable and must be treated with caution)			
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Afrikaans en Nederlands	51	30	22
Classical Civilization	5	11	22
Comparative African			
Govt. & Admin.	21	29	32
Economic History	11	18	6
Economics	23	17	11
English	83	11	32
French	5	29	29
Geography	23	6	6
Greek	1	100	100
History	24	17	25
Industrial Sociology	3	-	20
Introductory French	6	11	-
Introduction to South			
African Law	31	-	9
Jewish Studies	2	-	33
Language & Communication	1	-	50
Latin	17	58	12
Mathematical Statistics	1	50	-
Mathematics	5	43	29
Music	3	-	20
Philosophy	7	30	30
Political Science	7	60	100
Psychology	73	25	39
Roman Law	13	15	5
Social Anthropology	13	20	30
Sociology	33	24	32
Speech & Drama	23	60	27
Zulu Language &			
Communication	7	30	10

The results are a little disturbing for virtually all the courses for which we have sufficient numbers to say something. Very broadly, some 25 percent taking the "larger" subjects would like to drop them (or would have liked to do so) and some 21 percent consider that the courses have not matched their expectations. Courses where the student reaction seems more positive than average are Economic History, Economics, Geography, Introduction to S.A. Law and Roman Law. These comments exclude the very small courses.

The students interviewed also listed any courses with which they would (or would like) to replace those courses they mentioned as wanting to drop. We list these below, giving percentages of the total sample where it was meaningful. Sociology (12%), Philosophy (9%), Comparative African Govt. & Admin. (5%), Economics (5%), English (5%), Psychology (5%), Economic History (4%), French (4%), Criminal Law (3%), Speech & Drama (3%), Language & Communication (3%), Political Science (3%), Zulu Language & Literature (3%), Geography (3%), Biblical Studies (2%), Afrikaans en Nederlands (2%), History (2%), Music (2%), Spanish (2%), Industrial Sociology (2%), and Business Administration (2%). Other courses listed by one or two students each are Marketing, Introduction to South African Law, Social Anthropology, Classical Civilization, Fine Arts & the History of Art, Roman Law, Physics, Classical Hebrew, Computer Science, German, Mathematics, Introductory French, Latin, Geology, Arabic, Theology, Physical Education, Biology, and Town Planning. Three percent of the students want to change to either a B.Comm. or to a B.Sc.

Lacking any comparative data from other universities or faculties it is difficult to know whether or not these problems are serious. We suspect that students develop negative attitudes to course rather easily and that the results may not be too serious. There may also be a "sour grapes" element similar to that operating in regard to the images of lecturing staff. This we could not test due to the unreliability of small numbers.

## 5. PERFORMANCE

The academic performance of each student is judged primarily by his or her end-of-year exam results. However their test and project marks obtained during the year are taken into consideration, and also give some indication of their capabilities. The students, when interviewed, had not written their end-of-year exams and so were asked, on the questionnaire, to list subjects they were doing and test and project marks they had gained up to that point in time. Second and third-year students also indicated the subjects that they had written the previous year and symbols they had obtained.

Results were categorised as follows (taking an average of reported marks for all subjects):

### First-year students

1sts and 2nds dominantly	3%
2nds dominantly	42%
2nds and 3rds dominantly	30%
3rds dominantly	21%
3rds and Fail dominantly	4%

### Second- and Third-year students

#### 1. 1982 academic year

1sts and 2nds dominantly	9%
2nds dominantly	43%
2nds and 3rds dominantly	27%
3rds dominantly	18%
3rds and Fail dominantly	3%

#### 2. 1981 academic year

1sts and 2nds dominantly	3%
2nds dominantly	38%
2nds and 3rds dominantly	24%
3rds dominantly	30%
3rds and Fail dominantly	5%

The results of all the students as presented above were combined into three categories, namely "above average performance" (those who obtained predominantly 1sts and 2nds, or 2nds), "average"

(those who obtained predominantly 2nds and 3rds), and "below average performance" (those who obtained mostly 3rds, or 3rds and Fail). We give an array of results below which serves as an indication of differences in performance between various categories of students:

### The Distribution of Excellence

Factors associated with above-average university results (i.e. higher than average proportions dominantly obtaining 1sts and 2nds, and 2nds in their results):-

	<u>%</u>
Overall % for sample (1sts and 2nds/2nds)	43
Women	49
18 year-olds	50
First-class matric	57
Educated in small-town schools in South Africa	48
Live in middle/upper-middle class suburb of Durban	49
Mother's have degrees	59
Describe staff as difficult to approach	64
Regard staff as lazy	57
Find staff stimulating	50
Feel that reading does not fit in with possible exam questions	50
Find readings one-sided	50
Feel that reading repeats lecture material	65
Cannot get access to reading material	49
Consider study facilities in the main library inadequate	61
See a need for studying facilities in or near departments	55
Feel anxiety about future accommodation	53
Have warm relationships with classmates	49
Find (some) staff warm	57
Feel that a counsellor or counselling service is unnecessary	55

We do not claim that these results taken singly are statistically significant - they are merely suggestive and not too much should be made of specific differences in percentages. What they suggest as a pattern and in very broad terms is that school performance, home-background and mother's education is mildly associated with university performance. The students who obtain above-average results also appear to be more demanding and difficult to please as regards facilities, reading material and aspects of staff behaviour. They would appear to be marginally better



adjusted and independent with good social relations.

### The Distribution of Mediocrity

Factors associated with poor performance (i.e. higher than average proportions obtaining 3rds, and 3rds and Fail in their results).

	<u>%</u>
<u>Overall % for sample (3rds, and 3rds and Fail)</u>	31
21+ years	37
Third-class matric	52
Educated in large city in South Africa other than Durban	36
Fathers have degrees	45
Fathers have "lower professional" occupations	44
Dissatisfied with choice of courses	38
Find attending lectures "almost always" helpful	37
Find staff very approachable	53
Regard staff as hardworking	37
Do not feel that staff are reasonable in work demands	43
Cannot read quickly enough	38
Consider readings one-sided	39
Have no place to study at home	39
Have problems in social life	39
Feel anxiety about future accommodation	40
Lack self-confidence	43
Have no relationship with students of other race groups	48
*Conservatives ("the present system in South Africa does not have to be completely changed before meaningful reform is possible")	42

As one would expect, these results are the inverse of the previous patterns. For some reason there seems to be a relationship with father's education and occupation which contradicts the effects of mother's education. There is some evidence in research for the special effect of mother's education on children's performance.

In other respects, the mediocre students seem to be more dependent on lecture material than others and have perhaps a better relationship with staff in general than the brighter students (possibly because they need it). There is evidence of personal problems and stress in their lives.

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\* See later discussion.

### The relationship to Matric Results:

Of those interviewed, 42 percent obtained first-class matrics, 32 percent second-class matrics, 21 percent third-class matrics, and 1 percent mature-age exemptions. (4 Percent were not sure what class of matric they had obtained.)

It is interesting to note, in contrast, that, of those whom we have classified as above average in university performance, 59 percent have First-class matrics, 27 percent have Second-class matrics, and only 14 percent have Third-class matrics. On the other hand, of those with below average performance, only 26 percent have First-class matrics while 34 percent have Seconds and 40 percent have Thirds. Here we are finding no more than the very typical relationship between school and university results which is well documented in previous research.

Some relationship also exists between performance in specific school subjects and performance at university. We present below the percentages of students whom we classified as "above average" at university who obtained A's or B's for specific subjects in matric:

<u>Matric A or B in:</u>	<u>Proportion classified as above average at University</u>
Foreign languages (Latin, French, etc.)	86%
Mathematics	68%
Sciences	67%
English	64%
Geography	61%
History	57%
Other subjects	43%
Average for whole sample	43%

The apparently powerful relationship between performance in foreign languages in matric and university performance is very noteworthy. The other relationships are generally what we have learned to expect. The strong relationship between matric performance in foreign languages and the university results may be peculiar to Arts students.

## 6. STUDENT PROBLEMS

### 6.1 The Student and Part-time Employment:

One does not usually associate employment with full-time university students. Our results quickly corrected this impression. A question posed to the sample students was, "*Do you have a part-time job?*". No less than 55 percent claimed to have part-time work. As many as 38 percent worked in both term-time and vacation, 15 percent in vacations only, and 3 percent in term-time only.

For easier reference, two categories were established, namely "No Job", which includes those students who have no job at all as well as those students who have jobs in vacation-time only. "Jobs" were those who worked in term-time or in both term-time and vacations. The effect of jobs on term work could thus be established. In terms of this grouping, 61 percent have "no job" and 39 percent have a job.

Those students with a job stated how many hours per week they worked. Results were as follows, with results for third-year students in brackets:

- Light (1 to 10 hours per week)	46%	of the total with jobs	(40%)
- Moderate (10 to 20 hours per week)	42%	" " " " "	(40%)
- Heavy (20 hours plus)	12%	" " " " "	(10%)

Twenty eight percent of the first-year students interviewed had work, and of these 43 percent were "light" jobs, 43 percent "moderate", and 14 percent "heavy". Forty eight percent of the second-years had jobs, with 50 percent being light, 46 percent moderate and 5 percent heavy. Fifty four percent of the third-year students worked, with 40 percent of these having light jobs, 40 percent moderate jobs, and 20 percent heavy jobs.

These results indicate a surprising degree of extra-academic

work activity among the students. Our impression is that this has increased in recent years under the impact of inflation.

All students with jobs were asked their reasons for taking the job. As can be expected, most students work to earn extra pocket money for personal expenditure (53%). However, the need to work in order to pay for living expenses and university fees forms a significant percentage of the total (29%). The more personal reasons given for having a job were to work in order to gain experience and out of interest (11%), to avoid boredom (5%), or to be independent.

We have already noted those factors which are associated with university performance. Working for remuneration during term-time does not appear to be a factor associated with poor performance. As a matter of fact, it may even be associated with higher energy levels and interests. We present below the relationship between work and performance at university as it emerges from our results:

<u>Student performance</u>	<u>No term-time work</u>	<u>Term-time work</u>	<u>10 or more hours of work per week</u>
Above average	44%	41%	38%
Average	24%	32%	34%
Below average	32%	27%	28%

From these results we see that while there appears to be a marginal tendency for working students to be relatively less likely to obtain Firsts and Seconds, there is an equal tendency for them to be less likely to obtain Thirds or to fail. Overall, the relationship between term-time work and performance is not significant or substantial.

## 6.2 The use of Time:

The way the student uses his or her time together with other factors is of importance in determining academic results.

We have already seen that term-time remunerative work does not appear to affect university results, and therefore emphasis must be placed on the use of time and perceptions of time needed for academic success rather than on absolute amounts of time available.

In order to assess the students' opinions with regard to use of time, they were asked: *"What do you consider to be an adequate amount of working time for all the courses you are doing this year? Take an average week, not just before exams or tests. Include lectures, tutorials, reading, studying, and practicals."* Results showed the following pattern:

- up to 20 hours a week (up to 4 hours a weekday)	19%
- 21 to 30 hours a week (4+ to 6 hours a weekday)	35%
- 31 to 40 hours a week (6+ to 8 hours a weekday)	31%
- 41 to 50 hours a week (8+ to 10 hours a weekday)	13%
- 51 to 60 hours a week (10+ to 12 hours a weekday)	3%

Obviously these perceptions will differ with academic level. A breakdown of the amount of working time considered to be adequate according to year of study is as follows:

	<u>1st-year students</u>	<u>2nd-year students</u>	<u>3rd-year students</u>
Up to 20 hrs a week	17%	11%	36%
21 to 30 hrs a week	37%	35%	32%
31 to 40 hrs a week	34%	33%	18%
41 to 50 hrs a week	9%	20%	11%
51 to 60 hrs a week	3%	2%	4%
Total	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>
Median Time	<u>29,4 hrs</u>	<u>31,7 hrs</u>	<u>24,8 hrs</u>

As one would expect, it is the second-year student who considers himself or herself to be under most time pressure, and the number of subjects in combination with the greater difficulty of second-year subjects compared to first-year subjects would account for this. However, there does appear to be a considerable drop-off in time pressure in the third year. One wonders whether or not standards and expectations should not be raised at this level.

### 6.3 Personal and Academic Problems:

It is often said that university students face a double set of problems - meeting stern tests of their academic and intellectual ability and adjusting to their rapid emergence into the world of the adult. In order to identify critical problem areas, a range of possible problems were presented and the student was asked to indicate those which applied to him or her.

#### 6.3.1 Reading Recommended Literature:

Firstly the question was posed: *"Does your reading in one subject interfere with reading for other subjects?"* Some 39 percent said "frequently" and 43 percent answered "sometimes", indicating that over 80 percent of the students experience pressures. (Only 18 percent said "seldom").

Secondly they were asked to indicate other specific problems in reading. These emerged as:

- insufficient time	72%
- readings often too difficult	50%
- too much reading to memorise	50%
- cannot read quickly enough	33%
- cannot get access to reading	31%
- readings often unrelated to syllabus	22%
- reading does not fit in with possible exam questions	19%
- readings are one-sided	19%
- reading repeats lecture material	18%



A perceived reading overload seems to be the major factor. One might expect students to develop a complaining ethic about reading, however, and the extent to which these results represent a significant problem is difficult to say.

### 6.3.2 Studying Facilities and Problems:

This is an issue of obvious importance, perhaps affecting residence students and day students in different ways.

Problems that seem to exist for the students are:

	<u>Total Sample</u>	<u>Sample in Residences</u>
- have personal difficulty in settling down to study	51%	60%
- worry about other matters affects concentration	43%	48%
- need studying facilities near or in departments	34%	30%
- inadequate study facilities in main library	27%	30%
- transport time or difficulties reduce time for study	29%	10%
- no suitable place to study at home	23%	8%
- health problems affect studies	7%	15%

Of specific importance here is that 70 percent of the black students interviewed indicated that they have no suitable place to study at home, whereas only 16 percent of the white students found this to be a problem. Also, 60 percent of the blacks mentioned transport time or associated difficulties to be a problem compared with 24 percent of whites.

### 6.3.3 University Careers: Anxieties and general problems:

Students were also questioned about any anxieties regarding their university careers or their general adjustment to university

life. The ordering of anxieties and problems emerged as follows:

	<u>Total Sample</u>	<u>Sample in Residences</u>
- university results	74%	78%
- choice of later career	55%	63%
- financial problems	45%	46%
- personal problems in social life	22%	28%
- lack of self-confidence	15%	35%
- lack of sympathy by the University authority	15%	20%
- problems about accommodation	10%	15%
- fitting in with student life	9%	8%
- feelings of being discriminated against	8%	10%

The proportions indicating various kinds of anxieties are remarkably high. One must bear in mind, however, that it is relatively easy, indeed perhaps automatic, for students to indicate anxiety about university results, and perhaps even financial problems. What is somewhat less to be expected, however, is that such a high proportion of students should record anxieties regarding choice of careers, personal problems and lack of self-confidence.

It is also interesting to note how certain anxieties are particularly pressing among students in residences. Residence life can be a "hothouse" environment which nurtures some problems simply because there is relatively less opportunity than exists for day students to find comforting social niches.

#### 6.4 Social Activities:

The set of results immediately above alert us to the very great importance of social relationships in facilitating student adaptation. How the student relates to other people on the university campus is of importance to his or her general performance,

outlook and morale. We can expect that if he or she feels alienated, excluded or isolated, the full benefit of the university experience may not be appreciated. On the other hand, if he or she relates well to classmates, friends on campus, members of staff, and students of all race groups, more contact with others may encourage well-being and enthusiasm.

The students interviewed were asked to rate their relationships with various groups of people on campus. Results reflected the following:

<u>Relations with:</u>	<u>Warm/ friendly</u>	<u>Just adequate</u>	<u>No relationship</u>	<u>Feel excluded/ isolated</u>	
Classmates	53%	39%	7%	1%	100%
Friends on campus	84%	13%	3%	1%	100%
Members of staff	14%	48%	34%	4%	100%
Students of other race groups	40%	43%	20%	2%	100%

Relationships with friends on campus are the warmest and friendliest, as one would expect, followed by relationships with classmates. Few students have no relationship or feel excluded or isolated, and hence there does not seem to be evidence of any great problem.

The relationships between students of different race groups are less immediate. Although few actually feel excluded or isolated, one fifth have "no relationship". This is probably because they do not actually come into contact with students of race groups other than their own although it is undoubtedly a matter of choice in many cases. Perhaps it is more important to note that 40 percent of the students do have warm, friendly relationships with students of other race groups and that interaction is occurring. This fairly high proportion is very positive.

Relationships with members of staff are generally neutral or cold. Over 80 percent of the students feel the relationship is either just adequate or non-existent. It is difficult to assess whether this is a problem or not.

It is of interest to identify categories of students where social relationships constitute a problem of relatively greater magnitude than average. We found higher than average proportions indicating feelings of isolation or exclusion in the following groups:

- Classmates: males, blacks, students in residence, and students who feel that coming to university was not a right choice.
- Friends on Campus: students with jobs, and students who feel they have not made the right choice in coming to university.
- Members of Staff: males, black students, students in residence, students with jobs, 2nd-year university students, and students who feel they have not made the right choice about university.
- Students of other Race Groups: males, white students, students in residence, students with jobs, 3rd-year university students, and students who feel they have not made the right choice in coming to university.

These results reflect a pattern. It would seem as if poor social integration on the campus relates to feelings of having made the wrong choice in coming to university. Which of the two is prior in causal effect we cannot say. Black students and students in residence clearly experience a greater degree of social alienation than other students.

Included in a student's social activities are any voluntary associations that he or she may belong to. Those interviewed were asked to *"list clubs, societies and groups you belong to on campus"*. The results showed that 31 percent of the students do not belong to any association whatsoever.

The distribution of activities among those who do belong is roughly as follows:

religious organisations:	17% (of all students)
political (including campus politics):	8% ( " " " )
other diverse, including academic:	45% ( " " " )

Religious activity tends to be the single largest focus of organised group activity on the Campus. Sport is excluded from the enquiry.

#### 6.5 Perception of Additional Support Needed:

An important focus of the investigation was to ascertain what needs might exist for additional student support services. Therefore we attempted to find out what support the students perceive as potentially beneficial to them in helping them overcome the numerous and varied problems they may experience at university.

The question put to them was: *"Do you feel that the university needs a counselor or counselling service which meets your specific needs?"* We asked this in the full knowledge that such a service exists already. Thirty one percent of the total indicated a need for a service, 45 percent said that "It has one already", and 24 percent felt it to be "Unnecessary". Therefore there would appear to be a balance in favour of some form of extended counselling service on the campus.

Among those who thought that the university does need an extended counselling service, various suggestions were made as to what they thought such a service should be or what it should try to do. We categorised the replies as follows:

##### A service should:

give more attention to helping students with problems, i.e.:	
Generalised and varied guidance	27%
Personal adjustment (e.g. self-confidence)	23%
Study problems	12%
University course and subject guidance	12%
Career choice	10%
Finances	4%
Accommodation	2%

A few students felt that existing counsellors should be more knowledgeable about courses and subjects offered while others felt that individual departments should have counselling services.

At a more academic level, the attitude of each student towards the university service was established by asking them: *"Do you feel that the university is doing all it can to help you achieve the best academic results?"* If they felt the university was not doing all it could, we asked *"What do you think the university could do to help you achieve better results?"*

Forty seven percent of the students seem to feel that the university is doing all it can, whereas 53 percent do not feel that it is. It is perhaps disturbing that over half of the students appear to lack confidence in what the university is doing to help them academically. This image needs serious consideration. Suggestions given by students to improve this situation were many and varied, and included the following in rough order of importance:

- To change the marking system i.e. away from the present system of exams
- To have more tutorials/more practical work and less theory
- To improve lectures and course material
- To have more communication between lecturers and students
- To improve the library facilities
- To institute study programmes and aid in exams
- To generally improve working facilities
- To improve lecturers
- To introduce a forum where individual problems can be reviewed
- To have more organisation in the departments

These results are difficult to interpret in a specific way. It is clear that somewhere between one-third and roughly one-half of Arts students consider that the framework of university support and academic organisation could be improved. From these results one must accept that somewhat greater attention should be



given to student counselling, particularly in personal areas, although equal attention should be given to bringing the service closer to or more to the notice of the students. The results immediately above on the academic system show what most staff probably know already - that the examination system is stressful and alienating to many students. A solution to this problem is, of course, complex and beset with difficulties. However, there should be ongoing attempts at any university to reduce the anxiety-level in examinations and to make examinations a more-adequate test of insight, judgement and understanding, rather than the retention of material.

## 7. THE MORALE OF THE STUDENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

As relative idealists, students are frequently very sensitive to broader issues which will affect their prospects in the world after graduating. The perception of our society's future by students perhaps gives some indication of the morale of the student in present-day South Africa. For this reason we felt it necessary to include questions of a political nature relating to future stability.

One of the questions was: *"At present, how do you feel about your future in South Africa?"* The results show a wide range of perceptions:

Very pessimistic	- 13%	} 40%
Fairly pessimistic	- 27%	
Neither pessimistic nor optimistic	- 27%	
Fairly optimistic	- 27%	
Very optimistic	- 6%	

Although more students are pessimistic than optimistic, the difference is not great. However, students tend on average to be more pessimistic than working adults. In a nation-wide survey among whites in 1981, CASS found that 32 percent of whites were pessimistic about their future in South Africa, compared with the combined percentage of 40 percent above.

A second question related to future political developments in South Africa, and in particular to reform and stability. Results appear below:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Perhaps</u>	<u>No</u>
- meaningful reform is occurring at the moment	15%	41%	44%
- meaningful reform is possible without violence and confrontation	38%	48%	14%
- the present system has to be completely changed before meaningful reform is possible	58%	24%	18%

These findings show a fairly progressive or even radical attitude in a broad sense. However, only a small minority of students appear to have no hope at all for change without violence.

Fairly sharp differences between the political views of black and white students can be seen in the following results. The results for blacks (i.e. all non-whites) are tentative because of the small size of the group in the sample.

Your future in South Africa:

	<u>Pessimistic</u>	<u>Optimistic</u>	
White	38%	35%	
Black	55%	20%	(the remaining %'s answered "neither Pess. or Opt.")

Future Political Development:

1. Meaningful reform is occurring at the moment:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Perhaps</u>	<u>No</u>
White	18%	42%	40%
Black	0%	35%	65%

2. Meaningful reform is possible without violence and confrontation:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Perhaps</u>	<u>No</u>
White	41%	47%	11%
Black	20%	50%	30%

3. The present system has to be completely changed before meaningful reform is possible:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Perhaps</u>	<u>No</u>
White	55%	26%	19%
Black	80%	10%	10%

Although more black students see meaningful reform as possible without violence and confrontation than we expected, the

results generally give a clear indication of the very negative perceptions of the prospects for change among blacks. Their morale is certainly at risk with these kinds of perceptions, for very understandable reasons.

## 8. BLACK STUDENTS: A TENTATIVE PROFILE

From some of the results already discussed it is clear that black students have greater problems of adaptation than whites. Although the small size of the black sub-sample (n 20) makes it impossible to generalise with any confidence, we felt it appropriate to present a brief profile of differences between black and white responses in order to draw together the tentative indications our results give us.

Generally the black students in the sample were slightly more convinced than whites about their choice in coming to university (perception of correct choice - black 85 percent, white 75 percent) and fewer were dissatisfied with their choice of courses (5 percent vs 12% among whites).

The black students have rather more favourable views of staff than whites in regard to approachability (they also sought guidance from staff more readily), helpfulness, organisation of lectures and in terms of the guidance staff gave with assignments. Their attitudes to staff are more negative than those of whites as regards the work demands and the feeling that staff do not like students.

Black students have particular problems with reading. Fewer blacks than whites found access to reading easy (35% vs 55%), more found reading for some subjects interfering with others (50% vs 35%), higher proportions had insufficient time for reading (85% vs 70%), found reading too difficult (60% vs 49%) and felt that there was too much reading (60% vs 49%). In other respects, however, black students were less critical of the prescribed and recommended reading than whites.

As said before, much larger proportions of black students had no place to study at home (70% vs 16%) and experienced problems of transport time (60% vs 24%). Very many fewer blacks have

term-time jobs than whites (10% vs 45%).

Higher proportions of blacks than whites have financial problems (65% vs 42%), have problems in fitting in with student life (20% vs 7%), feel discriminated against (20% vs 6%) and felt that the university authorities were unsympathetic (30% vs 13%). Yet a greater proportion feel that the university is doing all it can to help them (60% vs 45%). Slightly more blacks than whites would welcome an expanded counselling service (40% vs 30%).

Finally we should perhaps note one difference which is of significance in understanding the problems of black students as a group - only 5 percent obtained first class matric passes compared with 51 per cent among whites (the latter passing a matric with a higher standard to boot).

## 9. CONCLUSIONS

This brief and exploratory study among Arts students reveals a generally positive attitude and approach to university work and university life. In particular, students seem to have an academically mature attitude to their work and approach it fairly creatively. In other words, there is little evidence of a mechanical or rote-learning attitude to their studies and reading.

The majority of Arts students are well-integrated in a social sense and seem to enjoy university life.

While the general picture is favourable, there is evidence of problems in a number of areas. Firstly, it would seem as if a disturbingly large minority of students, particularly in the junior year, have negative rather than positive motivations in coming to university. Too many choose a university career simply because of a desire to avoid alternatives or because of nothing better to do. These students have greater problems of academic adjustment than others.

Another area of problems concerns the image of staff. Staff are perceived as less approachable and also less objective than what students seem to expect, and other image problems exist as well. To some extent this is due to a reaction against staff by students who do not perform well or who are generally dissatisfied, but even among others the image of staff has weaknesses. Partly as a consequence of these image problems, rather fewer students seem inclined to approach staff for help and guidance than should be the case.

Very high proportions of Arts students perform remunerative work in term-time mainly to earn spending money. While the drain on the students' reserves of time due to term-time work does not seem to affect their performance at university meaningfully, it may cut into their time for reading quite seriously. Possibly this

is one reason among others why students seem to find the amount of prescribed and recommended reading too large. Therefore, while high proportions of students had complaints about the amount of reading, it would not seem appropriate to change policies in this regard.

This study tends to show, once again, that a high standard of matriculation pass is very closely associated with adaptation to university life, both academically and otherwise. To a considerable extent the problems of black students must be understood in the light of this relationship. The above average students are more independent, more critical of staff and less-inclined to develop personal problems.

There is a somewhat disturbing reaction to course-content among students inasmuch as large minorities find courses disappointing and would like to drop them if they could. We are not suggesting any inferiority of course-content however. This is a complex problem and would require much more intensive research in order to uncover the more precise dynamics of the problem.

Returning for a moment to the problem of availability of time, it would seem as if the real time-stress occurs at second-year level. There is a surprising drop in the amount of study time which students deem appropriate in the third year. With this in mind, we would suggest that if the Faculty were to wish to raise standards, the efforts should be concentrated on the third year where students seem to be least pressurised.

A range of specific problems seem to exist for students, and there is a very definite tendency for residence students to have more personal and social problems than others. Generally, the greatest problems are in the personal sphere - lack of confidence being the most salient.

The appearance of problems of social adjustment are not random or diffuse, but seem to be concentrated among those students



whose motivations in coming to university and whose general satisfaction with university is most questionable. In other words, there may be categories of students with a cluster of inter-connected problems.

There appears to be a need among substantial minorities of students for some extension of the university counselling service in the area of personal problems and also in the area of career guidance, as we have already indicated. Since the university has a counselling service, the need may be primarily to explore additional ways of attracting students who feel they need help. There may be a specific need for counselling among the residence students, where the incidence of felt problems is greatest.

Black students, as one would expect, have particularly sharp problems. We have no doubt, however, that these needs are being addressed and that the attention given to black students will steadily improve.

Broadly speaking, while the typical Arts students have a fairly strong sense that a great deal needs to be changed in our wider society, they do not appear to be seriously demoralised by the prospects they perceive for their future in South Africa. They are more pessimistic than working adults but not very dramatically so.

APPENDIX ICHARACTERISTICS OF SAMPLE

Total sample = 150

Sex:

Male = 61 (41%)

Female = 89 (59%)

Age:

18 years 27 (18%)

19 years 46 (31%)

20 years 35 (23%)

21-22 years 24 (16%)

23-24 years 12 ( 8%)

25+ years 6 ( 4%)

Home Language:

English 140 (93%)

Afrikaans 3 ( 2%)

Other 7 ( 5%)

Marital Status:

Single 143 (95%)

Married 4 ( 3%)

Divorced/Separated 3 ( 2%)

Where Living:

University  
Residence 41 (27%)

Private Lodgings 10 ( 7%)

At home with  
parents 87 (58%)

At home with  
relatives 2 ( 1%)

Other 10 ( 7%)

or:

University Residence	41	(27%)
Upper Middle-class suburbs in Durban	59	(29%)
Other Durban suburbs	48	(32%)
Other areas out- side of Durban	2	( 1%)

Year of University:

1st	76	(51%)
2nd	46	(31%)
3rd	28	(19%)

Colour:

Black	20	(13%)
White	130	(87%)



## QUESTIONNAIRE

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FACULTY OF ARTS/

CENTRE FOR APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Board of the Faculty of Arts has established a subcommittee, to study factors affecting student success. This study among students in the Faculty of Arts is being undertaken at the request of this committee. The results will be considered by the Faculty.

This questionnaire covers a range of important student concerns. Your replies will be completely anonymous. We do not record your name. Please assist us by giving your views and experiences as a student in the Faculty of Arts.

- 1) Please give us your main reasons for choosing university education when you first enrolled.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ 4

2. \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ 5

3. \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ 6

- 2) Do you feel you made the right choice in coming to university as opposed to something else?

Right choice

Have reservations

Wrong choice

	1
	2
	3

8

2/.....

3a) How satisfied are you with your choice of courses?

Satisfied	1
Uncertain	2
Dissatisfied	3

9

3b) Could you mention courses you would have liked (or would like) to drop, and courses you would (or would like) to replace them with?

	Courses to drop	Replacements		
1.			10/11	12/13
2.			14/15	16/17
3.			18/19	20/21
4.			22/23	24/25
5.			26/27	28/29

4) Thinking of the courses you have done, which courses have fallen short of expectations you had of them?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 30/31
2. \_\_\_\_\_ 32/33
3. \_\_\_\_\_ 34/35
4. \_\_\_\_\_ 36/37

5) What do you consider to be an adequate amount of working time for all the courses you are doing this year. Take an average week, not just before exams or tests. Include lectures, tutorials, reading, studying, practicals.

- up to 20 hours a week (up to 4 hours a weekday)
- 21 to 30 hours a week (4+ to 6 hours a weekday)
- 31 to 40 hours a week (6+ to 8 hours a weekday)
- 41 to 50 hours a week (8+ to 10 hours a weekday)
- 51 to 60 hours a week (10+ 12 hours a weekday)

1
2
3
4
5

38

6) What is the main purpose of a lecture?

-----

-----

39
40

7) What is the main purpose of seminars and tutorials?

-----

-----

-----

3/.....

41
42

- 8) How helpful or not do you find attending lectures?

Almost always or all lectures

Most of the time/most lectures

About half-and-half

Less than half of the time

Almost none of the time

1
2
3
4
5

43

- 9) How helpful or not do you find seminars and tutorials?

Almost always or all

Most of the time/most seminars/  
tutorials

About half-and-half

Less than half of the time

Almost none of the time

1
2
3
4
5

44

- 10) What two things do you want to achieve from your university education - the first and second most important?

1st. \_\_\_\_\_

2nd. \_\_\_\_\_

□ 45

- 11a) If you do or were to have difficulties in coping with a subject or subjects, how likely would you be to go to your lecturers or tutors for help?

would definitely approach staff for help

would possibly approach staff

would probably not approach staff

would definitely not approach staff

1
2
3
4

46

- 11b) If you are unlikely to approach staff, why would this be?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

47

48

- 12) Think in general of the staff teaching your courses this year. Think of the typical staff member, not the worst or the best. Describe the staff by making a cross (x) in the appropriate place below.

TYPICAL STAFF TEACHING YOUR COURSES

Very approachable	<input type="text"/>	difficult to approach	<input type="text"/> 49
Help favourite students	<input type="text"/>	help all students	<input type="text"/> 50
Know their subjects well	<input type="text"/>	uncertain in their subjects	<input type="text"/> 51
Lazy	<input type="text"/>	hardworking	<input type="text"/> 52
Objective and balanced	<input type="text"/>	biased and ideological	<input type="text"/> 53
Seem to dislike students	<input type="text"/>	seem to like students	<input type="text"/> 54
Clear, well-organised lectures	<input type="text"/>	poorly organised and muddled	<input type="text"/> 55
Insufficient guidance in assignments	<input type="text"/>	adequate guidance in assignments	<input type="text"/> 56
Reasonable in work demands	<input type="text"/>	expect too much from students	<input type="text"/> 57
Boring	<input type="text"/>	stimulating	<input type="text"/> 58
Understand my difficulties	<input type="text"/>	very little understanding of my difficulties	<input type="text"/> 59

13. How easily are you able to find and have access to recommended reading?

very easily	quite easily	with some difficulty	with great difficulty
1	2	3	4

60

14. Does your reading in one subject interfere with reading for other subjects?

frequently	sometimes	seldom
1	2	3

61

- 15) When you read recommended works in a subject, with what purpose in mind do you read?

-----  
 -----  
 -----

6

- 16) Could you indicate by marking with a cross (x) below what your problems in reading are - mark as many as apply to you.

Reading Recommended Literature

- insufficient time	2	63
- reading does not fit in with possible exam questions	2	64
- cannot read quickly enough	2	65
- readings are one-sided	2	66
- reading repeats lecture material	2	67
- readings often too difficult	2	68
- readings often unrelated to syllabus	2	69
- cannot get access to reading	2	70
- too much reading to memorise	2	71

- 17) As regards your studying facilities, could you mark with a cross (x) where problems exist for you:

- no suitable place to study at home	2	72
- inadequate study facilities in main library	2	73
- need studying facilities near or in departments	2	74
- have personal difficulty in settling down to study	2	75
- worry about other matters affects my concentration	2	76
- health problems affect my studies	2	77
- transport time or difficulties reduce time for study	2	78

- 18) Do you have a part-time job?

yes ☐ no ☒

79

(If yes) In term time  2

or

vacations  3

or

both  4



(if yes) Hours per week in term \_\_\_\_\_

Hours per week in vacation \_\_\_\_\_

(If yes) What are your reasons for taking the job?

80

3

- 19) Most students feel more or less anxious about their university careers. Could you indicate with a cross below (x) in what areas you experience anxiety from time to time:

- Financial problems \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 4
- Choice of later career \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 5
- Your results \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 6
- Personal problems in your social life \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 7
- Problems about accommodation \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 8
- Fitting in with student life \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 9
- Discrimination against you \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 10
- Lack of sympathy by the university authorities \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 11
- Lack of self-confidence \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ 12

- 20) How would you rate your relationships with the following people. (Mark with (x)).

	Warm/ friendly	Just adequate	No relationship	Feel excluded/ isolated	
Classmates	1	2	3	4	13
Friends on campus	1	2	3	4	14
Members of staff	1	2	3	4	15
Students of other race groups	1	2	3	4	16

- 21) Do you feel that the university needs a counselor or counselling service which meets your specific needs?

Yes	Unnecessary	It has one already
1	2	3

17

- (If you answered yes) Could you tell us briefly what such a service should be or what it should try to do.

-----  
 -----  
 -----

☐ 18/19

- 22) At present, how do you feel about your future in South Africa?

very pessimistic

fairly pessimistic

neither pessimistic nor optimistic

fairly optimistic

very optimistic

	1
	2
	3
	4
	5

20

- 23) As regards future political developments in South Africa, how do you feel in regard to the following

- meaningful reform is occurring at the moment

- meaningful reform is possible without violence and confrontation

- the present system has to be completely changed before meaningful reform is possible

Yes	Perhaps	No
1	2	3
1	2	3
1	2	3

21

22

23

- 24) Do you feel that the university is doing all it can to help you achieve the best academic results?

Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2 24

- 25) (If you feel the university is not doing all it can) what do you think the university could do to help you achieve better results?

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☐ 25

- 26) Finally, we would like a few background details so that we can group people by age, sex, etc. for the computer analysis. Mark with (x).

Sex

Male	Female
1	2

26

Age

16-17 yrs	18 yrs	19 yrs	20 yrs	21-22 yrs	23-24 yrs	25+ yrs
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

24

- 27) Matric results - please write symbols below subjects you wrote:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Subjects							
Symbol							
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	28	29	30	31	32	33	34

28) Class of Matric

1st	2nd	3rd	Mature age exemption
1	2	3	4

35

29) Home language

English	Afrikaans	Other - specify
1	2	3

36

30) Marital status

Single	Married	Divorced/Separated
1	2	3

37

31) School (name of school and town and suburb)

-----

-----

38/39

32) Where you live at present.

University Residence	Private lodgings	At home with parents	At home with relatives	Other specify
1	2	3	4	5

40

33) Area

Campus Residence	Suburb in Durban please specify	Suburb/Town outside Durban please specify

41/42

34) Father's/Guardian's occupation (or last occupation before retirement)

43/44

35) Father's Educational level

less than Std. 8.	Std. 8/9	Matric	Post Matric Qual.	Degree
1	2	3	4	5

45

36) Mother's Educational level

less than Std. 8.	Std. 8/9	Matric	Post Matric Qual.	Degree
1	2	3	4	5

46

37) Results at University.

## S U B J E C T S

1st years					
Please write in subjects and list all your test and project marks.	MARKS				

47

48

49

## S U B J E C T S

2nd year and higher. Please write in subjects doing this year and list marks for tests, projects etc.					
		MARKS			

 50 51 52

## S U B J E C T S

2nd year and higher. Please write in subjects done <u>last</u> <u>year</u> and symbols obtained.					
		MARKS			

 53 54 55

38) Please list clubs, societies and groups you belong to on campus.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

 56/57



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